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A damaged Air Canada jet seen on the runway at New York's LaGuardia Airport on Monday after colliding with a firefighting vehicle after landing | AP | P17

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2 INDIAN LPG TANKERS CROSS STRAIT

Two more Indian-flagged tankers, Jag Vasant and Pine Gas, carrying 92,612.59 MT of LPG transited through the Strait of Hormuz on Monday, said the Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways. The vessels have 33 and 27 Indian seafarers onboard, respectively, and are set to reach Indian ports between March 26-28, said Rajesh Kumar Sinha, special secretary, Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways

PANIC BUYING OF PETROL IN GUJ

Several petrol pumps in Gujarat on Monday witnessed long queues of motorists after rumours about fuel shortage spread through WhatsApp and other messaging platforms, forcing the state government to step in to clarify that there is no shortage. Deputy Chief Minister Harsh Sanghavi said sufficient quantity of fuel is available in the state and appealed to citizens not to panic | P10

Situation worrisome, says PM

W Asia crisis to have long-term impact on global economy; India prepared to face challenges

JAYANTH JACOB @ New Delhi

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Monday described the escalating crisis in West Asia as "worrisome", warning of long-term global repercussions while assuring Parliament that India is prepared to safeguard critical sectors such as energy, fertilizers, and power supply.

Addressing the Lok Sabha, Modi said the conflict has already begun to weigh heavily on the global economy and hit people's livelihoods. "The current situation in West Asia is worrisome. This crisis has been going on for more than three weeks, having a very adverse impact on the global economy and on people's lives."

The PM highlighted the strategic importance of the region for India and said it meets a significant share of the country's crude oil and gas requirements and is home to one crore Indians. He added that he is in constant touch with regional leaders. "I have spoken with most of the heads of state in West Asia, and they have all assured the safety of Indians."

DAY 24 WAR WATCH

On the ongoing disruption in key maritime routes, Modi said the "closure of Hormuz is unacceptable". Despite challenges in cargo movement, he said the government is working to ensure minimal disruption to fuel and gas availability.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi speaks in the Lok Sabha on Monday | SANSAD TV VIA PTI

"In the last decade, India has prioritised storage of crude oil for times of crisis. Today, India has a strategic petroleum reserve of more than 53 lakh metric tonnes, and work is underway to create reserves of 65 lakh metric tonnes," he said, noting that long-term policy decisions are paying dividends now.

"In the last 10-11 years, unprecedented work has been done on ethanol production and blending... Today, we are close to achieving 20% ethanol blending in petrol," he said, adding this has helped India cut crude imports by 4.5 crore barrels annually.

UK SENDS DEFENCE SYSTEMS

Britain is sending short-range air defence systems to the Gulf to counter Iranian missile attacks, Prime Minister Keir Starmer said Monday. "We're deploying short range air defence systems to Bahrain, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia."

US turnaround as Trump says talks on with Iran to end war

AGENCIES @ Dubai

US President Donald Trump on Monday said the US was in talks with a "respected" Iranian leader and claimed the Islamic Republic was eager for a deal to end the war, while extending the 48-hour deadline to five days for Iran to reopen the crucial Strait of Hormuz or face attacks on its power plants.

To justify his climbdown, Trump said there were "major points of agreement" in the US-Iran talks which he said must result in Tehran giving up its nuclear ambitions.

However, Iran flatly denied holding any such negotiations with the US. Iran's foreign ministry said Trump had backed down "following Iran's firm warning".

Trump's turnaround, which held out the possibility of resolving the war now in its fourth week, served to cool oil prices. The price for a barrel of Brent crude fell 9.7% to $101.26 on Monday, down from nearly $120 at one point last week, following the news of US-Iran talks.

Amid the disruptions in the Strait, Saudi Aramco, a major oil exporter, has reportedly cut crude oil supplies to Asian buyers for a second consecutive month in April.

Meanwhile, Israel on Monday said it had "begun a wide-scale wave of strikes" on infrastructure targets in Tehran. P17

Draft digi policy: Limit fun screen time for kids to 1 hr

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

THE Karnataka government on Monday released the draft policy for responsible digital use among students, suggesting that each school frame and enforce a digital use policy in addition to constituting a Digital Wellness Committee. The policy recommends limiting recreational screen time to not more than 1 hour per day outside of schoolwork and introducing tech curfew -- all screens off one hour before bedtime.

The draft policy follows Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's budget announcement on March 6 that the government will ban social media use for children below 16.

The policy has been drafted by involving the Health and Family Welfare department, National Institute of Mental Health and Sciences (NIMHANS), department of education, 60 professionals from education institutions and university representatives, parent representatives and cyber crime department. P4

T'gana seeks pay cut for staff neglecting parents

MANDA RAVINDER REDDY @ Hyderabad

THE Telangana Cabinet on Monday cleared a Bill that proposes to deduct up to 15% of the salary of both public and private sector employees who fail to take care of their elderly parents.

Under the proposed Parents Support Bill, if any public representative, government or private employee is found not taking care of their elderly parents, 15% of their salary or ₹10,000 (whichever is lower) will be deducted and given to their parents as financial support.

Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy had earlier indicated that the government was considering deducting salaries of government employees for parental neglect. But the inclusion of private employees in the Bill comes as a surprise.

The Cabinet also cleared the "Telangana Hate Speech and Hate Crime Prevention Bill, 2026", on the lines of a law enacted by the Karnataka government. The Bill seeks to curb social media posts, speeches, and actions that disturb communal harmony or incite violence, riots, and conflicts in the state.

EXPRESS READ

Assembly passes Bill to bring back ballot papers

Bengaluru: The Legislative Assembly on Monday passed the Karnataka Grama Swaraj and Panchayat Raj (Amendment) Bill, 2026, that seeks to replace Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) with ballot papers in gram panchayat, taluk panchayat and zilla panchayat elections | P4

Couple held for cheating job seekers of ₹23 crore

Bengaluru: The Central Crime Branch (CCB) arrested a couple for allegedly cheating over 100 job seekers of around Rs 25 crore. Jason D'Souza (39) and Lavina (36) allegedly collected money from the victims after promising them jobs in various departments of the Union and state governments | P3

Right to life applies to foreigners too, says SC

New Delhi: The Supreme Court said the right to life under Article 21 of the Constitution applies to foreigners as well. A bench made the observation while ordering release of a Ugandan woman who was languishing in jail, despite getting bail in a drug case as she could not give "solvent surety" | P9

4 DEAD IN PRAYAGRAJ COLD STORAGE COLLAPSE

The incident, in which 12 were injured, triggered panic as ammonia gas began leaking from the facility

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